

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 000554

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS:SCUL, PFOR, TECH, JA

SUBJECT: OKINAWA VOA INSTALLATION

1. USIA DIRECTOR KEOGH WROTE TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY DECEMBER 15 TO ASK THAT THE DEPARTMENT UNDERTAKE TO NEGOTIATE A NEW AGREEMENT WITH THE GOJ CONCERNING THE VOA FACILITY ON OKINAWA. USIA HAD PLANNED TO AUGMENT ITS PHILIPPINE RELAY STATION TO COMPENSATE FOR LOSS OF THE OKINAWA FACILITY (WHICH MUST CEASE OPERATIONS BY MAY 1977 UNDER TERMS OF REVERSION AGREEMENT). HOWEVER, AN OMB DECISION HAS DEFERRED APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR AUGMENTATION OF THE PHILIPPINE FACILITY UNTIL 1978. DIRECTOR KEOGH THEREFORE ASKED THAT WE SEEK EXTENSION OF 1977 DEADLINE UNTIL THE SUBSTITUTE FACILITY CAN BE BUILT.

2. IN HIS REPLY TO KEOGH, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY STATED
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THAT, BASED ON THOROUGH REVIEW OF NEGOTIATING HISTORY OF

RELEVANT PORTION OF REVERSION AGREEMENT, DEPARTMENT CONCLUDES THAT IT WOULD BE UNPROFITABLE AND PERHAPS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE TO REOPEN THIS ISSUE WITH GOJ. WHILE AGREED MINUTE TO ARTICLE VIII OF REVERSION AGREEMENT ALLOWS CONTINUED OPERATIONS SHOULD "UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES" PREVENT COMPLETION OF SUBSTITUTE FACILITIES BY MAY 1977,

GOJ MADE IT CLEAR DURING CONSULTATIONS IN 1974 THAT TERM "UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES" WAS TO BE INTERPRETED NARROWLY. DESPITE STRONG EMBASSY REPRESENTATIONS IN SUPPORT OF LIBERAL INTERPRETATION, GOJ STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT TERM REFERRED ONLY TO "NATURAL CALAMITIES." RECORD OF THOSE CONSULTATIONS ALSO SHOWS THAT GOJ EMPHASIZED IMPOSSIBILITY OF GOING TO DIET TO REQUEST EXTENSION ON GROUNDS THAT USG HAD ENCOUNTERED BUDGETARY DIFFICULTIES. AT FINAL MEETING ON THE SUBJECT, US SIDE RELUCTANTLY AGREED THAT MATTERS CONCERNING BUDGET, SITE ACQUISITION OR CONTRACTURAL COMMITMENTS WERE "FORESEEABLE" AND, THEREFORE, NOT GROUNDS FOR EXTENSION OF VOA OPERATIONS BEYOND MAY 1977.

3. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, AND IN LIGHT OF CLEAR GOJ AND DIET INTENT TO TERMINATE VOA OPERATIONS ON SCHEDULE, DEPUTY SECRETARY STATED THAT DEPARTMENT COULD NOT AGREE TO GO BACK TO JAPANESE ON THIS ISSUE.

4. FYI. USIA WILL REVIEW EARLY IN JANUARY POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION, INCLUDING POSSIBILITY OF CLOSING DOWN OKINAWA OPERATIONS IN ADVANCE OF 1977 DEADLINE. EMBASSY WILL BE INFORMED PROMPTLY WHEN RESULTS OF REVIEW ARE COMPLETE BUT SHOULD NOT DISCUSS WITH GOJ OFFICIALS UNTIL INSTRUCTED. END FYI. ROBINSON

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